

436

THE 1953 ISSUES

Major Speeches Delivered by the Presidential Candidates, President Elpidio Quirino and Former-Defense Secretary Ramon Magsaysay, at
the University of the East



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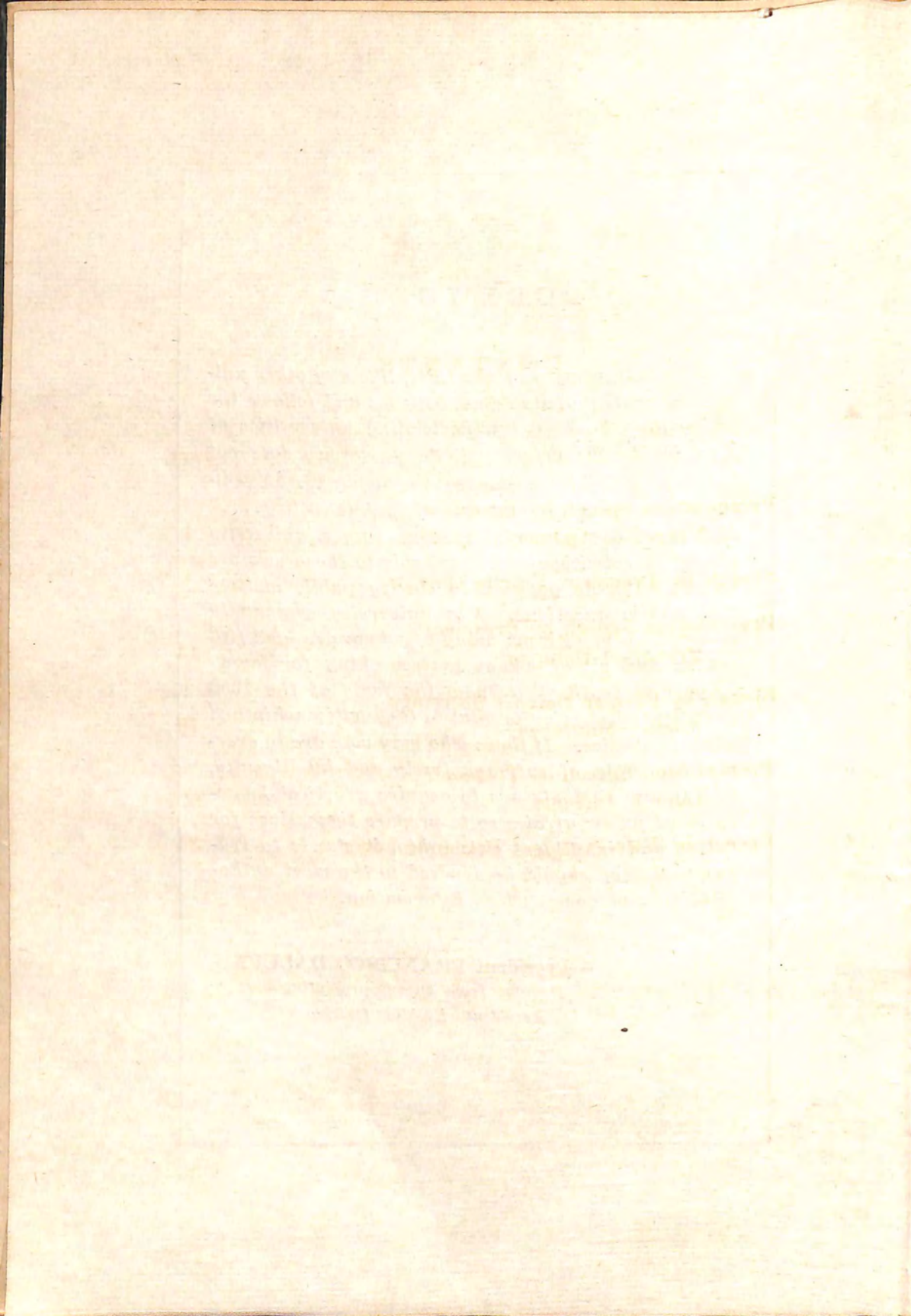
FOREWORD

The University of the East, like any other university worthy of its name, believes and follows the policy long honored by the leading universities of America to the effect that "a university does not take an official position of its own . . . on political questions or matters of public policy. . . ." But there are powerful reasons why a university should be solicitous and hospitable to those who are in the enviable position to clarify public matters and public questions. The university community is made up of citizens many of whom are qualified voters and all of whom are searching for knowledge and truth. To know the facts of the 1953 presidential election is vital to their citizenship and to their studies. If those who may vote are to exercise the right of suffrage freely and intelligently, and if our students are to acquire practical knowledge of public affairs so to prepare themselves for active and intelligent citizenship, it stands to reason that they should be exposed to the most authoritative and constructive information.

—President FRANCISCO DALUPAN

Extract from speech presenting

President Elpidio Quirino



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THE
GOVERNMENT
OF THE
UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

REPORT
ON THE
LANDS
OF THE
UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA
IN THE
STATE OF
NEW YORK
BY
J. M. SMITH
AND
J. M. SMITH
JANUARY 1900

REMARKS OF PRESIDENT FRANCISCO DALUPAN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST PRESENTING HIS EXCELLENCY, PRESIDENT ELPIDIO QUIRINO AS GUEST OF HONOR AND SPEAKER AT A GENERAL CONVOCATION OF THE FACULTIES AND STUDENT BODY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST

September 30, 1953

YOUR EXCELLENCY,
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,
FELLOW TRUSTEES AND FACULTY MEMBERS,
THE STUDENT BODY,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

The presence of the President of the Republic of the Philippines on any campus is a great honor to the university. At a time like this, when, on the eve of the national election to elect the highest officials of the Republic, there are issues so confusing as to bewilder the most intelligent voter, the presence of the Chief Magistrate himself, in order to clarify some of these issues, is a signal recognition of the importance and hospitality of a university community. On behalf of our own university community, I thank His Excellency, President Elpidio Quirino, for his presence and extend to him our warmest and fullest welcome.

His Excellency is not only the head of the nation; he is also a good and helpful friend of the University, and the co-sponsor with the late Mrs. Aurora Aragon Quezon, at

the inauguration and blessing of this very building which took place on August 28, 1948. At this time, he is with us in a third capacity; he happens to be a candidate for reelection to the very same office which he now occupies with dignity and distinction. He appears before us, therefore, as the highest national official, as a tried and true friend of the University and as one of the aspirants for the highest office within the gift of the people. So that there may not be any misunderstanding among us and among the public in general, I wish to repeat at the outset a policy I have often emphatically stated and on which I have often been quoted correctly in the newspapers. The University of the East, like any other university worthy of its name, believes and follows the policy long honored by the leading universities of America to the effect that "a university does not take an official position of its own... on political questions or matters of public policy." The reason for this policy is obvious. A university, which is committed to certain political plans and attitudes ceases to be the open-minded center of scientific inquiry that it should be and becomes merely an advocate, a propagandist, a partisan — conditions which, to say the least, are not calculated to be helpful to its main business of educating the youth.

But there are powerful reasons why a university should be solicitous and hospitable to those who are in the enviable position to clarify public matters and public questions. The university community is made up of citizens many of whom are qualified voters and all of whom are searching for knowledge and truth. To know the facts of the 1953 presidential election is vital to their citizenship and to their studies. If those who may vote are to exercise the right of suffrage freely and intelligently, and if our students are to acquire practical knowledge of public affairs so to prepare themselves for active and intelligent citizenship, it stands to reason that they should be exposed to the most authoritative and constructive information.

No one will dispute the fact that the President of the Philippines himself is the best source of the most authoritative and constructive information on the affairs of our government. But may I add that there is still another reason for our decision to invite His Excellency to appear before this audience. It is to give ourselves the opportunity to see him in the flesh after his two critical operations in the Johns Hopkins Hospital and the rumors, which spread even to our campus like bush fire, that he had passed to the Great Beyond. Behold him, therefore, not a ghost but a man full of vitality and life, and draw from his case the useful lesson that fiction always far outruns fact. (*Applause.*)

His Excellency, the President, needs no introduction. This is not the first time that he has honored us with his presence and counsel. Neither is he a stranger to the people here or elsewhere, for he is their President and our President. It only remains for me to say, therefore, that it is a great honor and a genuine pleasure for me once more to present His Excellency, the President, as our guest of honor and speaker of the evening. (*Applause.*)

EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEECH OF HIS EXCEL-
LENCY, PRESIDENT ELPIDIO QUIRINO AT
A GENERAL CONVOCATION OF THE
FACULTY AND STUDENT BODY OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST

September 30, 1953

PRESIDENT DALUPAN,
MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES,
MEMBERS OF THE FACULTY,
STUDENT BODY OF THIS GREAT INSTITUTION,
FELLOW GUESTS AND FRIENDS:

I want to thank you for the opportunity to be with you this afternoon. I assure you I was more than eager to stand before this huge assemblage if only to show to this intelligent and understanding group that your President, using a popular idiom, is still kicking around. (*Applause.*)

Filipinos are rich in imagination (*laughter*), and richer still in speculation. (*Laughter.*) There is nothing rhetorical about these expressions. They are true to form in my case.

I understand that some newspaper publishers, in their eagerness to make a scoop—natural in the newspaper profession—had extra editions ready announcing my death when it was learned from sources not too friendly that my second surgical operation was not responding satisfactorily to treatment. Had that happened, that is, the announcement of my premature death, I

would have enjoyed reading my own obituary upon my return from the United States and experiencing the unique opportunity of finding out how my people felt towards me and my stewardship in the last five years.

I thank the Almighty that I came back not dead but rid of the ailment that would have hampered my efficiency and usefulness to the nation and now able to lead a life of further fruitful achievement, if given a chance to do so. (*Applause.*)

About a year ago, invited to appear before the student body of this great University, I was asked point blank if I was running for re-election. Desirous not to harm my administration by arousing suspicion regarding the motives of my actuations thereafter, I shied at the question.

Now I am prepared to answer it in the affirmative. I must say at the outset that in seeking nomination I did not beg for it. I simply made my position clear. I was lying flat in my bed on May 12 of this year when my party nominated me unanimously as its standard-bearer.

My friends, I have been serving for more than five years, pushing a program not only of administration but of nation-building of the greatest scope, its effect most far-reaching upon our people. You are all familiar with conditions obtaining in Manila immediately after Liberation. You know what have transpired in our life as a nation, how we have established our Government since we inaugurated this Republic on July 4, 1946. The residents of Manila, in particular, and those of the neighboring provinces who went through the darkest hour of our history, bear witness to the great strides we have since taken politically and economically. I need not recite my role during this period of reconstruction, rehabilitation, and nation-building. The record speaks for

itself. My conscience is clear. One thing I know, that my descendants will be proud of the fact that I presided over the destiny of this nation, encouraging and enabling our people to stand on their feet and establishing a government now respected — even loved and envied — by friends and associates from across the seas.

I do not attribute the great development of this country during the last six or seven years solely to my personal efforts. But I must say that whatever this country has been able to accomplish under a national program of action has not been done by accident. Somebody must have planned that and generated the motive power and pushed the program through to enable us to attain economic and political stability that we now enjoy. I repeat I do not attribute all of this personally to my efforts, but I am proud to state there has been proper coordination, and as a result, despite the systematic obstruction in recent years by the opposition, we have pushed our program through successfully. In the last three years, we have inaugurated one project after another in our program of development.

Now that we are about to complete our program, new issues have cropped up, confusing the public mind and retarding, even stultifying, our advance to our national goal.

I want to thank you, Dr. Dalupan, for the opportunity to elucidate on some of those issues and to stress their importance to our future existence as a nation.

We are still in the midst of that task. We have, so far, broadened the foundation of this Republic and set up thereon the essential parts so that the superstructure could withstand the impact of increased activity. Unfortunately, there has arisen a body, a band, a demolition squad, so to speak, the professional wreckers of this Administration, pointing out not only to us

but to the whole world that we have been a failure. But only yesterday those people, now harassing and embarrassing us, were my associates who found words insufficient to describe our progress in nation-building.

Strange things do happen in politics. Friends today, enemies tomorrow. Why? Because political power is so viciously attractive that it makes one easily forget past associations and affections. The tantalizing lust for power brings out one's uglier traits. Detractors predict that this coming election is the last call for democracy in our country.

But this country is going to last. The foundations are well laid and made secure not only locally but internationally. Aside from the bold total economic mobilization which we launched in 1949, we have established relations to achieve our external security, entering into pacts and understandings with the United States and our associates in the Pacific and in the Atlantic.

Heretofore the issues in this campaign have centered on the matter of qualifications of the candidates—that so and so is too young, that so and so is too old, that so and so is inexperienced, that so and so loves the common tao. I am prepared to show that under the direction of my party, the Liberal Party, this country has attained stability and strength. I rely on that record and on the sense of fairness of our people as the hour for final decision approaches.

However, a new issue has cropped up—an issue that endangers this country after having climbed from humiliation in recent years. The opposition has raised the bugaboo that the party in power in order to win in the next election would commit fraud and terrorism and that it is necessary for the United States to intervene, in the name of democracy, so as to preserve the institutions we have succeeded in establishing in this country.

As a matter of fact, the opposition is signalling throughout the world for help because its rightful leader is afraid to fight for his own party and to face me in this election.

Now the opposition is dragging down the name and prestige of this administration with the threat that a foreign country is supporting my opponent and that I must watch out because, if my tenancy in office and the present administration are prolonged, the United States will withdraw the assistance being extended to us. My opponents are calling on a foreign power to supervise our internal affairs avowedly to restore democracy. Let me tell you with all possible emphasis that democracy in this country has never been more vigorous.

What kind of democracy do they want, what kind of political institutions, what kind of tolerance, what kind of patience do they want? Is it not a fact that most people you meet in the streets, in the bars, in the restaurants, on the platform, on the radio, and in the press freely and loudly criticize your own President even exceeding the limits of decency and decorum? Some even go to the extent of conveying the impression that I am lame, that I am sick, that I should no longer continue in office, that it is time for me to retire. Retire—I would like to do that, but not in the way they have been trying to persuade me—through intimidation and threat.

First, they invited me and the presidential aspirant who failed in 1949 to withdraw from the presidential race, in the name of patriotism and democracy, in order, it was claimed, to avoid bloodshed and revolution. Instead of accepting that proposition, believing that the one I defeated in 1949 was ready—and I felt ready myself—I told him (Dr. Laurel) to stand up and fight for himself. They failed in that. Then they sounded out the alarm that, if I ran for re-election, there would be

violence, revolution, bloodshed everywhere. That did not scare me or my party.

Again they went to the people and told them that if I were re-elected or the present administration were to continue, the United States of America would stop the assistance we have been receiving from her. They kept on anticipating that there would be fraud, terrorism, and bloodshed in the next election, urging a foreign power to come to the Philippines to restore peace and order and to secure the election of the American candidate to the same post.

That is the true and naked issue that the opposition has raised lately. Are we going to allow the United States of America—or any other power for that matter—to come to the Philippines, supervise our election, and place ourselves under foreign control in order to make way for the candidate avowedly supported by the United States of America?

Unfortunately, such threats, which in the past I considered childish, have been fanned lately by a susceptible American correspondent who, after a few days' visit, had the cheek to tell us that the candidate of the United States—the American people and official Washington—was my opponent. Now, there have been half-hearted attempts from opposition quarters to deny that the opposition's candidate bears the American brand, but my own opponent himself has had the temerity to assume the role of spokesman for the United States, repeatedly proclaiming that, if the present administration continued in office, America would withdraw her aid from the Philippines. Speaking of colonial-mindedness, this takes the cake.

My friends, I have come to you with a message and a mission. It is necessary to know the background of what I am going to say. The bugaboo of fraud and ter-

rorism, which they claim will be perpetrated by the present administration, is nothing but an advance *alibi* for the defeat they fear to encounter in the coming election. It provides a convenient smokescreen for their own fraud and terrorism.

The trouble is they cannot conceive the Filipino people of being capable of grappling with multifarious problems, going farther than did past generations faced with problems of less magnitude, and making readjustments, collectively or individually, to enable this country to meet the present world exigencies. My opponent cannot understand that our people can just smile at those threats and promises being dished out in the barrios and the outlying districts—threats of putting people to jail for graft or corruption, fantastic promises of improvement for the common *tao* — as so much rigmarole to distract the people away from the primary and real issue in this campaign, which is to continue building this nation in order to insure its stability and durability. It is not a question of whether one party should be given a chance to hold the reins of power. This is not a race for power. The issue is, which party can serve and promote the interests of the country better, politically and economically.

In other words, shall this country continue in its momentum of upward surge in the preparation of its stability and durability or shall we entrust the future of this country to untried, adventurous hands merely hungry for power and relying on foreigners who may destroy the very independence and sovereignty of this country?

This continuous talk of bloodshed, of fraud, of terrorism, of intervention of the United States is destroying the morale of the people, driving away prospective investors, discouraging the development of industries, poisoning the economic and political life of our people,

smearing the name and prestige of this Republic, and sacrificing the honor and dignity of our people.

My friends, you need not be afraid of fraud, of terrorism, of bloodshed, of revolution. Revolution cannot come from this administration. Revolution cannot come from the governing power. Revolution means defiance of the established order. The people's will is supreme here. The established order is in our hands, your hands.

Revolution must come from the minority, and if the minority wants to make good its threat, I want to announce now that I am prepared to meet that threat without the assistance of any foreign power. (*Applause*) I shall die fighting for our sovereignty and dignity. (*Applause.*)

In the early days, when we were organizing our own government and preparing our treaties and understandings with other nations, especially with the United States, I had the great privilege of being instrumental in concluding each and every treaty entered into by our Republic. And I have shown, and the minority must admit, that I have never ceded any single territory, not even an inch, by any dubious concession of extraterritorial rights in the very City of Manila. (*Applause*) And as long as I am at the head of this nation, as long as I have the power and the strength of life to stop those who would like to take advantage of this most mercenary, undignified attitude and who would invite foreign intervention, I will resist to the last drop of my blood any such attempt. (*Applause.*)

Why did we work so hard, fight for centuries, repel enemies who came here in successive waves, and make our shores crimson with our blood? Why the struggle for centuries and centuries to be independent and sovereign and now, simply for the election of one candidate

for president, barter everything—the fame and dignity and sacrifices of our people? We survived national crises to attain liberty and freedom, prosperity and progress. Why should we now turn the clock back and return to servitude and servility to oblige a presidential candidate?

My dear friends, you who are going to lead this country tomorrow, this is a great lesson in political philosophy. Those in the past who cried out loud for nationalistic, assertive principles of government and opposed creative political cooperation with the United States are the same individuals now banded together, foisting on our people a new type of nationalism, a patriotism to subordinate our interests to those of a single man, simply because they want to down one person, Elpidio Quirino. I knew the personal feeling of hatred, of suspicion, of envy, of bitterness involved in this effort, and our country is being pulled down by this issue, invoking principles when they don't know what principles they are relying on now.

These Nacionalistas of today—where were they when we needed the assistance of the United States? They faced northward, toward the Mikado, and associated with our enemies in the name of the East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. They never wanted America to come back. Now America is asked by these Nacionalistas to be the saviour of democracy. What a mockery!

My friends, I do not want to be unkind by making a comparison of the conduct of our leaders during the darkest hour of our history and the attitude of those leading the nation today, but history will show you that those who are now crying loud to the sky for intervention did not want American intervention when we needed it most. As a matter of fact, they openly defied America, and now that America could be their source of po-

wer, strength, and influence in this country, they turn their backs and cry: "America, come and save us." All in the name of democracy and patriotism!

I want to stress, my friends, that there will be no fraud; there will be no terrorism by the administration. We don't need that to win. As far as I am concerned, I make the solemn pledge that no matter what is going to be the result of the election I would rather sacrifice everything than besmirch the good name and sovereignty of this government. (*Applause.*) My long years of association in our government affairs and the opportunities given me to serve my country and people are too precious to be sacrificed for a brief continuation of the present honor that I now enjoy as the head of this nation.

My friends, I must tell you once more that this bugaboo of fraud and terrorism is being raised to cow the people, to cow the administration, to intimidate—meaning us—that if you don't vote for the American candidate, this country will go to the dogs. The challenge is for you to make use of your intelligence and express your real sentiment—your patriotism and appreciation of the historical development of this country. (*Applause.*)

SPEECH OF PRESIDENT FRANCISCO DALUPAN
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST PRE-
SENTING THE HON. RAMON MAGSAYSAY,
NACIONALISTA CANDIDATE, AS GUEST
OF HONOR AND SPEAKER AT A GENE-
RAL CONVOCATION OF THE FACUL-
TIES AND STUDENT BODY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST

October 17, 1953

MR. SECRETARY,
MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
AND FACULTIES,
STUDENT BODY,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I do not mind telling you that, of all the prominent and distinguished men and women we have invited to the University, Secretary Magsaysay has been the hardest to convince. At one time or another, we have had as guests the presidents of two nations, the Philippines and Indonesia; we have had the pleasure of welcoming to our midst foreign ambassadors as well as our own diplomats, elder statesmen, and ladies prominent not only on their own but also on account of the high positions of their husbands. But in no case before this time has the invitation extended to any of them been more than the respectful and pleading request in consonance with their high positions and distinctions. In the case of Secretary Magsaysay, however, we have had to write letters, burn the wires, crash social and professional affairs, and avail our-

selves of the assistance and cooperation of mutual friends. In fact, we started inviting Secretary Magsaysay to be our guest last January in connection with our anniversary celebration, and our publications, including the *UE Founder*, printed his picture with the announcement that he was to come to our campus. Therefore, if I may stretch the point a bit, I can truthfully say that it has taken us about a year to get him here in body and spirit. Of course, during all this time, I never felt that he was purposely shying away from us, for I do know that he is a good and true friend of our University. Indeed, I have it on good authority that even when he is on other campuses, he never fails to remember us. (*Laughter.*)

On the surface, such a phenomenal resistance to an invitation to appear publicly may seem strange in a candidate for public office. Candidates are known to be always looking for audiences to talk to and groups to shake hands with. But his postponing his coming here is, in a way, a measure of the man we have with us today. He is not an ordinary candidate nor an ordinary man. He is a unique product of our times and our problems, a man who became a candidate for president drafted by one party from the ranks of another, and for whose candidacy a third party abandoned its presidential and vice-presidential ambitions and joined the swelling crowd rallying around him.

But before I go further in my discussion of Ramon Magsaysay, I should like to say a word regarding the position of the University of the East with respect to the presidential election as well as all other elections. It is well-known that there are institutions of learning which take sides in political controversies. The fact that we have taken great pains to bring the two presidential candidates before our community should be sufficient proof that we are neutral and impartial. The University of the East itself cannot and does not take any position or an attitude with respect to candidates for public office and political parties.

When, therefore, the University sponsors convocations such as what we are holding today, it is only for the purpose of enabling our University community to exercise its academic freedom with intelligence. Freedom, whether on a University campus or in our general society, implies knowledge of the basic information and the ability to think logically on the part of the citizen. There is, I believe, no better help to the garnering of such information, to serve as the materials of independent and logical thinking, than the very candidates for the highest positions in the government themselves.

With this necessary digression over, I now return to the more interesting subject of Ramon Magsaysay.

The rise of this man from relative obscurity to the most-talked-about man in this country and, to a certain extent, also abroad, has no precedent in Philippine politics. In an era of leadership scarcity, it took Sergio Osmeña several years in the public service to rise to the speakership of the Philippine Assembly and thus become the first Filipino national leader. It took Manuel L. Quezon to climb the political ladder from fiscal to Senate President something like fifteen years. Manuel Roxas needed about two decades to achieve the stature of a truly national leader. But it has taken Ramon Magsaysay only about eight years in the public service to gain not only national but international stature. His exploits as guerrilla leader and his energetic generalship of the fight against the Hukbala-haps have been so dramatic and so full of the courage, humanity and heroism of the storybook hero that they have captured the imagination of the press of two countries and fired the enthusiasm of their readers. Ordinarily, the expression "meteoric rise" is only a figure of speech; in the case of Ramon Magsaysay, it is a literal phrase. Whether he will win the election or not, he has become one of the conspicuous rallying points in the free world's fight against communism in defense of democracy.

Only about two weeks ago on a similar occasion, I had the great honor and pleasure of presenting to you His Excellency, the President of the Republic of the Philippines. That was not the first time that I had the entirely pleasant chore. In presenting the President, I experience a feeling of participating modestly in the unreeling of history, for history invariably records the acts of presidents. But today, in undertaking a similar task with Ramon Magsaysay as the subject of my efforts, I experience a feeling of participating, also in a modest measure, at the inception of an era, of witnessing the beginning of greater events to come, of hearing the heralds of a historic tomorrow. (*Applause.*)

I have known Ramon Magsaysay for only a few years of his young 46 years. I met him for the first time sometime last year when he received from the Quezon Colleges the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. I had the good fortune of sitting by his side on the platform and to listen to his thoughtful address of gratitude and acknowledgment for the honor accorded him. Since then, I have carefully watched his rapid growth in stature and popularity with the interest of one who was and is attracted by his dynamic personality. Before today, I saw him and heard him just two nights ago at the banquet of the Federation of Private Medical Practitioners held at the Philippine Columbian Club to which I had been invited by President Angeles of the Federation.

It is this relatively young but personable man whom we have the pleasure of having as guest of honor and speaker today. With a mingled feeling of pride, privilege and honor, I present to you a gallant guerrilla leader, a former congressman selected by the press as among the ten most effective members of the lower house, a former Secretary of National Defense who scored the first decisive victory over communism by a democratic country, and a Doctor of Laws from Fordham University — the Honorable Ramon Magsaysay. (*Prolonged applause.*)

POLICY ADDRESS OF EX-SECRETARY RAMON
MAGSAYSAY AT A GENERAL CONVOCA-
TION OF THE FACULTY AND STUDENT
BODY OF THE UNIVERSITY
OF THE EAST*

October 17, 1953

PRESIDENT DALUPAN,
DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF THE FACULTY OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST,
MY DEAR STUDENTS,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

President Dalupan was right when he said that it is very difficult to invite me. Well, my friends, I will tell you why it is always difficult to convince me. Perhaps I took after our mothers. Filipino womanhood, the sunshine of the Filipino home, is very difficult to convince, especially in courtship. (Laughter and applause.)

Furthermore, my friends, it is difficult to get me to speak before a distinguished crowd of university students and faculty members. This is because when I was a student myself, I was so poor that I had only a pair of shoes which got wet every time it rained. I had to use that pair of shoes everyday, in spite of its being wet, for three years. Due to this sad experience, I developed cold feet. (Laughter and applause.) And even now, as I stand before university students, I still suffer once in a while from cold feet. (Applause.)

* Italicized passages were delivered extemporaneously.

When President Dalupan did me the honor of asking me to speak before you today, I was very happy to accept the invitation for two important reasons: First, I consider it a great privilege to speak before the faculty and student body of this young, progressive institution; second, I have been anxious to speak again before you, the youth of the land, because I wish to express my views to you, and through you to the rest of our people, on a subject which should be very close to your hearts—National Defense. Our policy on National Defense should be of great interest to you young men and women not only because it has to do with the security of our country but especially because someday you yourselves may be called upon to implement it. It is a subject on which I do not claim to be an authority but with which I can claim, in all humility, a genuine experience.

Before I begin on my chosen subject, permit me first to pay tribute to the officers and men in the active service of the armed forces. We all owe them a debt of gratitude. They are serving in the best traditions of the soldier's creed.

I have served with these men. I know them well. They work and fight without complaint. But one should not be surprised if today they are shaken with mixed feelings of anger and shame as they contrast the heroic tradition they serve to defend with the moral cancer that afflicts the high councils of our government. Our army men are disciplined men of the highest order. Our country is blessed with a corps of officers and enlisted men who are well-trained for combat and, what is more important, who are acutely conscious of their duties as guardians of their country's honor. If left unhampered by undue pressure from above, they are certain to fulfill all our expectations and we can depend fully on their protection not only of our territorial integrity but, what

is more urgently at stake at the present time, our civil liberties.

But now the independence of our gallant forces is daily harrassed by unscrupulous men in power, who are eager to insure that the army shall not again play the role of protector of the people's sacred right. Top Liberal leaders are resorting to every foul means to violate the soldier's right to obey the law and his conscience in the performance of his duty. They are easing out high ranking officers whom they cannot expect to follow their evil designs, shuffling and reshuffling provincial commanders in positions vital to the Liberal party, apparently in a frantic effort to deny the free expression of the popular will.

It seems timely and proper now to appeal to the President and the head of the Liberal party, Speaker Perez, to stop this sinister inroad of politics into our army. All we can say now is that our hearts are with all our officers and men. We know they are all resisting this attack in the best way they can. These are grave moments of trial for them, but we know that they will never yield to pressure and that they will come through with the proud army honor held high and unblemished. We pray God to give them the added courage that they need at this hour. Our people will never forget their steadfastness and fidelity.

The development of the defensive strength of the Philippines is essential to the promotion of the general welfare of all our communities. I do not propose to discuss today how many infantry divisions we should arm, how many squadrons of jet planes we should fly, or how many battleships we should sail under our flag. Nor do I wish to impress upon you the terrors of any atomic war and the measures we should take to prepare us for such

an eventuality. Such discussion is better left to the staff rooms of our high command.

The question I would like to discuss is this: We are a small and young nation. How can we develop our defensive potential within our means, and in such a manner as to have a stabilizing influence on our lives and those of generations to come?

The strength of the Philippines, or of any country for that matter, is measured by two considerations; namely, the combined force presented by the number of trained battalions under arms in reserve, and the capacity of the country to maintain not only the combat front, but the home front as well.

The will and the means both to work and to fight are inseparable essentials to national survival. In modern warfare, subversion, psychological pressure, cultivated corruption in high circles, and outright threats of violence, are enemy methods to destroy the *will* to fight; shooting campaigns, sabotage, and economic strangulation, are designed to destroy the *means* of fighting.

Experience has shown that mental subversion of a people is the preparation for a physical assault. No nation that is ill-sheltered and underfed, in tatters and corruptly governed, could possibly offer more than a mere token resistance to psychological or physical invasion. Great powers invest heavily in military and economic assistance to other countries, in the interest of collective security and to bolster their own global defenses. A government that is morally bankrupt could not possibly be considered a bulwark against subversion. It could not be looked upon as a "worthy risk" for military and economic investment purposes.

The art of war is no longer the exclusive job of the professional soldier. The armed forces today represent

only a small section of the national effort to protect the country from unfriendly domination from within and from without. Today, every citizen, every man and woman is a soldier, and every useful thing is a target for destruction by the enemy.

The Philippines should maintain a standing force that is within the reach of our combined human and material resources. This force should be adequate to preserve order, and consistent with our modest international effort. Our standing force, should be able to adjust itself easily to the rise and fall of criminality and lawlessness in our country and to the varying degrees of threats from within or from without that call for military action.

Our Armed Forces must have a core of skilled professional soldiers. But the military leader's concern must be for the welfare of the common man as well as for his soldiers.

If elected, it is my aim to look upon the annual appropriation for National Defense not merely as a necessary expense for national military protection, but also as a vital investment in total national strength through the development of our natural and human resources for increased employment and production.

It is not my habit to indulge in idle dreams. The EDCOR settlements of Kapatagan and Buldon are a reality. But we must do more. We must plan towards an even more desirable goal. We must visualize a defense line of prosperous barrios and settlements built by men who love God and country, with homes to cherish and to protect; men of skill and discipline, and trained in the ways of democratic freedom. These communities could become in the future, the veritable bastions of democracy against which the assaults of Communism could never prevail. That my countrymen, to my way of thinking,

is the most lasting and most effective program of national defense.

Such a plan would immediately improve the lot of our God-fearing citizens whose aim is to work in peace with their neighbors and fellowmen. At the same time it will influence and benefit those who, through deception, threats and false promises, have gone astray in the past and taken up arms against our society, but who now show willingness to make amends and lead a peaceful life within the law.

But let there be no doubt that the primary duty of the Armed Forces should always be to stand ready to protect the peaceful citizen and his home. The full force of our arms should be applied without quarter, against the evil and the disloyal who would destroy our way of life, and whose aim for us is slavery in its most hateful form. They have earned the contempt and ire of our people. They deserve punishment to the full extent of the law.

Today, there actually is a world war going on. The targets are the wills, the minds and the hearts of the people. They are led to waver and to doubt by conspiracy and lies. Those who corrupt while in the high places of government, and those who wink an approving eye at the practice of corruption, are just as deadly as salvos from the enemy guns. Those who honor the public crook, and those who accept their company, are just as effective saboteurs as those who shelter foreign terrorists.

Our basic defense problem is the problem of good government, of restoring our pride as a people; of promoting dignity in toil, and of accepting responsibility in the community. The political mongrel who grabs at every morsel of favor thrown down to him by his cynical masters is more contemptible than the foreign spy who risks

his life in the trade in any country especially in this country of ours.

Let us keep our social and political structure sound, and we shall have the firm foundation of defensive strength. For we are nationally strong when the individual citizen is good, when the community is sound, when the leaders are true to their trust, when the government is responsive to the needs of the humble people of the country, and when we live with God. Only then may we survive as a people.

For many months now you have listened patiently to both sides of the political campaign. On November 10th the campaign will be over and our people will go to the polls to make known their decision. It is time we started to summarize the millions of words directed at your ears and eyes during these long months.

Let us now consider the case of the Liberals — *and I hope Budget Commissioner Sychangco will excuse me, because he is in the front row; (laughter) but Commissioner Sychangco is a good Filipino, (applause) — the case of the administration which wants to be kept in power, and we will keep many of them in power — many of them are good Filipinos — if elected. (Applause.)* Their case has had three distinct lines. First, using every dirty trick in the book, they tried to smear me, sneer at my humble background, and laugh at my program. Second, they tried to win the approval and endorsement of the United States. Third, they boasted of their accomplishments. How successful have they been? Let us examine each line separately.

A feeble attempt was made to attack my honesty. This stupid attempt was quickly and completely demolished when I returned to Manila and faced them with with documented, unassailable facts.

Then they spread the lie that I had changed my religion for political expediency and political advantage. **(Laughter.)** *And they have falsified and faked an affidavit saying that I was baptized May 10, 1953, in the Iglesia Ni Cristo.* This was quickly proved to be a lie. As a citizen in a democracy, I am tolerant and respectful of all religious beliefs, but I was born and raised a Catholic, baptized a Catholic, still a Catholic. and I expect to die a Catholic. **(Applause.)**

When I went directly to the people in the cities and towns and remote barrios, to see for myself how they lived and what they needed, Mr. Quirino called it cheap and vulgar. Now they are trying to imitate me. **(Laughter.)** They even made a Barrio Week. But they do not ride in jeeps and walk along dusty roads as I did. They travel in planes and cars and yachts paid for by the taxpayers' money of my country. **(Applause.)** And as for being cheap, they do not even hesitate to defile the church of their fathers by using it as a political stump.

As for my program, they laughed until they almost choked on their scotch-soda when I said that our people were entitled at least to safe drinking water. But here, too, they showed themselves to be great imitators. I am told that at least one of the towns mentioned in my radio appeal to Malacañan has just been given a water supply. However, it seems they cannot leave their poker tables long enough to do much more. The San Lazaro compound today is overflowing with good iron pipes, bought by American taxpayers' dollars so that our people would have safe water supplies. Our administration sees this precious and critical material only as a storage problem. Even though they knew for many months that this aid was coming, and that even more is on the way, they made no plans to put it to use for the benefit of our people.

There is no need to spend much time on their second line, their effort to win American endorsement. Every one of us feels a sense of national shame over that disgusting episode. First they tried to bully the American embassy into saying something nice about their administration, even calling American economists communistic when they insisted on telling the bitter truth. Then President Eisenhower was chased all over the country in the United States in an effort to get at least one picture for Liberal campaign literature. (Laughter.) And when these efforts failed, when it was realized that America was really determined to stay neutral in our elections, these great statesmen of the administration turned to screaming and kicking like spoiled hysterical children who want a second helping of ice-cream.

Now let us look at their third party line, at their boasted list of accomplishments. President Quirino seems to forget that I was once a member of his cabinet, a member of his party, that I knew what was going on in those critical days of 1950 and 1951. I have said before that the progress we have made since those dark days was made in spite of the administration, that the credit belongs not to Liberal politicians, but to our American friends and to the energy and intelligence of our own private citizens. I say that again because it is a fact that can be proved by the records in our own government files.

President Quirino claims credit for American aid. The truth is that it was the U.S. embassy in 1949 that finally convinced him that his administration's neglect had brought our nation to the edge of bankruptcy—that before the end of the year our foreign reserves would drop below the danger point. By October of that year, our teachers and soldiers had gone without pay for several months, and it was only an American loan that brought them relief.

And in 1950, I was with Governor Cuaderno of the Central Bank in Washington and he failed to borrow even only a loan of P5,000,000 for this government.

President Quirino claims credit for the Bell Mission. The truth is that he fought against it for months, insisting on a joint mission that would whitewash the corruption and incompetence of our administration at that time. When Ambassador Cowen held firm, he threatened to have him recalled, giving in only when we faced collapse.

President Quirino claims credit for the ECA (later called MSA and now FOA). He claims credit for the Foster-Quirino agreement. The truth is he was forced to accept the terms of that agreement or get no aid at all. He was told that America could not help us in our economic development unless he cleaned house, unless he stopped squandering the nation's money and balanced the budget, unless he secured legislation that would make sure that the aid reached the people who needed it, the workers and farmers. The minimum wage act. The "Magna Carta" of labor. The tenancy reforms. The improved tax laws. Look at every piece of worthwhile legislation and you see, not the hand of Malacañan, but the patient hard work of American technicians working with our Congress *against* the resistance of Malacañan. Remember, I was there in those days, and the tired MSA people used to come to me for encouragement. *There was a time when they wanted to deport Mr. Valery Burati of the MSA who was in charge of labor.* This is the cold, hard truth.

President Quirino takes credit for the progress of the aid program. And incidentally, he now admits publicly that he wants to be president in name only, that the real president will be the man who was in charge of that aid program. So let us see how successfully both these gentlemen made use of American aid. Keep in mind that it was,

and is, our government's responsibility to suggest and plan the projects on which the aid funds are spent.

The U.S. Congress appropriates funds for foreign aid programs in accordance with the speed and efficiency that those funds are used. Listen to the comment of Mr. Prentice, writing in the *Fookien Times Yearbook* as acting director of MSA. He says:

"To avoid an acute case of administrative indigestion—inability of government agencies to expand fast enough to put dollar commodities and peso counterpart to work on economic development—available dollar funds from the program will be reduced from the annual allotment of about \$30 million of fiscal year 1952 to somewhat under \$20 million for fiscal year 1954"; *therefore, a reduction of almost \$10 million.*

Well, Mr. Prentice turned out to be an optimist. Mr. Quirino's administrative indigestion was so bad that they were able to spend only under \$18 million in 1953. The result is that MSA, discouraged, has cut the allotment to about \$16 and a half million for 1954—all because of administrative indigestion. And the man responsible is the man Mr. Quirino promises to give you as a substitute if you re-elect him to office.

And what about the dollars that were really spent? Anyone with eyes can see the desperately needed irrigation pumps rusting in bodegas where they have lain neglected for many months. Anyone with eyes can see the fertilizer, rotting in broken bags, because the administration failed to have it distributed to our farmers. But what is even worse is the fact that the completed MSA projects are threatened with collapse because the administration failed to make provision for their upkeep and maintenance. That, my friends, is Mr. Quirino's "total economic immobilization." (Laughter.)

Or take military aid as an example. Ask Mr. Quirino if it is not true that the United States refused to enter into the military assistance pact unless he first cleaned out the corruption and inefficiency of his armed forces. Ask him if it is not true that when he suggested that I be made Secretary of National Defense, the American negotiators promptly agreed, and only then was the pact concluded. (Applause.)

These are matters of hard fact. Mr. Quirino cannot deny them. And when you add them up they mean one thing: in seven years of power, the Liberal administration has accomplished only one thing. They have stuffed their pockets and their bellies while millions of our people are starving, *especially in our rural areas.* (Applause.)

That is why Mr. Quirino faces defeat. That is why he cannot even pretend to keep his clean-election promises. That is why he swears he will keep our ballot free to *save democracy in this country* and turns his back while gangsters are organized to terrorize the voters, while ink eradicator is sent to custodians of the ballots and *provincial treasurers*, while key officials are shuffled to put honest public servants where they cannot interfere with fraud, and while his party's journalistic mouthpiece urges that foreign correspondents and observers who tell the truth should be deported from the Philippines.

You have contributed, my friends, in the election of 1951. Thousands of ROTC cadets volunteered to police that election. My friends, many of us fought in the battlefield of war for the kindred words of liberty, justice and equality. And because you also fought for those three kindred words, you wanted to interpret them with more precision and accuracy in peacetime. You volunteered to police the election of 1951, my friends, to fight for those three words, not in the battlefield of war but in the battlefield of peace. We succeeded in that election of 1951. And,

my friends, today we have only the Army to help us preserve democracy here. And I hope that it will live up to the expectations of the Filipino people and the world. Our Chief of Staff, General Duque, played a major role in the election of 1951, my friends; let us anchor to our Army in this election of 1953 and let us hope that it will carry us across again at this critical period of our history.

That is why Mr. Quirino is now making dark threats of revolution, trying to build himself an excuse to use naked force to keep himself in power. That is why plots are being hatched with hardened criminals to cause disturbances which will give him an excuse to tear up our Constitution.

My friends, six passes were given to six Huks to come down to liquidate Magsaysay! And one of the Huks came down and handed over to me his pass given by this administration. This Huk commander told me: "Mr. Magsaysay, when you were Secretary of National Defense and we were in the mountains, you ordered your agents to locate our families. You distributed food to our starving wives and sick children. You hospitalized our sick and you gave jobs to those able to work. Nine thousand five hundred Huks surrendered to you and you gave them lands, electric lights, bulldozers, roads, water system and all the conveniences of city life. We are human beings. I cannot come down and kill you. I am surrendering to you this pass." (Applause.)

That pass will come out someday. I have the pass at home; I'm sorry, I did not bring it with me tonight. (Prolonged applause.)

I am telling Mr. Quirino now that he does not frighten us with his threatened abuse of power. If there is any violence, it will have to come from him and from the gangsters on his payroll. *I have cautioned the Nacionalista Party not to commit any violence, but to humble them-*

selves in all conflicts because, my friends, we do not want to set fire to our democracy. And I know the students of the University of the East are with me in this election of 1953. The people of this nation stand solidly with me for democratic progress, democratic processes and free elections. You want a free election because you will be the future leaders of this country. We want to be a true democracy today, not twenty years from today; and we want to hand over to you this democracy and our country safe from the terrorists of the Liberal Party, my countrymen. We have faith in the strength of our constitutional rights and in the law. We have faith in the overwhelming might of the popular will. We stand unarmed but confident in our moral power, in the vigilance and steel purpose of an aroused people. We will face the Liberal party's goons and all the frauds they concoct—and we will win!

Thank you, and God bless you all! (Prolonged applause.)

SPEECH OF PROFESSOR LINO J. INCIONG,
ADVISER OF THE POLITICAL SCIENCE CLUB,
UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST, PRESENTING
THE HONORABLE FERNANDO LOPEZ,
VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES,
AS SPEAKER AND GUEST OF HONOR
AT A SPECIAL CONVOCATION OF
THE CLUB HELD ON THE UNI-
VERSITY QUANDRANGLE

November 3, 1953.

DISTINGUISHED GUEST,
PRESIDENT DALUPAN,
MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES,
MEMBERS OF THE FACULTIES,
FELLOW-STUDENTS AND FRIENDS:

We are honored with the presence here this afternoon of a man whom the Filipino people, in the exercise of their constitutional prerogative, elected Senator in 1947 and Vice-President in 1949.

He entered public life for the first time in 1945 as Mayor of the City of Iloilo.

His rise from that position to the office of Vice-President of the Republic of the Philippines, and concurrently, Secretary of Agriculture and Natural Resources in four years, is a feat yet unequalled in our political history.

A tireless champion of good government, he personifies what Confucious described as a government official in

an ideal society, a model of propriety in his private and public life maintaining his leadership by example.

A leader of his own people, he has given true meaning to that aphorism known to every student of political science that "A PUBLIC OFFICE IS A PUBLIC TRUST".

Ladies and Gentlemen: The Vice President, Honorable Fernando Lopez. (*Applause.*)

ADDRESS OF THE HONORABLE FERNANDO
LOPEZ, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF THE PHILIPPINES, AT A CONVOCATION
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE POLITI-
CAL SCIENCE CLUB, UNIVERSITY
OF THE EAST

November 3, 1953

PRESIDENT DALUPAN,
MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES,
MEMBERS OF THE FACULTY AND
STUDENT BODY,
AND FRIENDS:

Seven days from today, the electorate of this country will go to the polls to exercise the right of suffrage vouchsafed by our Constitution. Through the democratic process of election, our people shall choose from among the candidates who have offered their services to the nation those who shall sit in the highest councils of our government and guide our destinies during the next four years.

As I am not a candidate for reelection, this will in all probability be one of my last public appearances as Vice-President before you. This is the reason why I gladly accepted the invitation extended to me by your Political Science club and welcomed the opportunity afforded me by your distinguished president, Mr. Dalupan, to address this non-partisan assembly of young men and women, knowing, of course, that I would find here an audience responsive to the political needs of the nation and alive to the responsibilities of citizenship in a democracy.

During the last four years, it has been my privilege to serve our people as Vice-President of the Republic. While some may think of the office of Vice-President as nothing more than a decorative fixture — especially in the one-man administration of the past — I have considered the job a great personal challenge and have devoted my best and sincerest efforts to fulfill my sworn duty to preserve and defend the Constitution of the Republic, to execute the laws without fear or favor, to do justice to every man irrespective of class and political affiliation, and to consecrate myself to the service of the Nation. (*Applause.*)

This was the solemn oath that I took four years ago when President Quirino and I stood before a great populace at the Luneta to assume the two highest elective positions in the land. I cannot speak for others; but for myself, I can say in conscience and before God that I have done my best to fulfill the oath and to serve you and to serve this nation.

My record as Vice-President is known to all. Under the most trying conditions, I have endeavored at all times to do my share in the constructive job of nation building in which we are engaged today. It was in this spirit that I accepted various administrative positions in the government, among them that of Economic Coordinator and later that of Secretary of Agriculture and Natural Resources. It was also in the same spirit that I crusaded during my four-year term of office for efficiency and honesty in the government, knowing that there cannot be progress and material well-being in this country without an efficient administration to make it possible. In plain words, it is useless to make grandiose economic plans and talk of national prosperity without first establishing here a good, clean and honest government. I am convinced that this is the basic need of our country today.

I have consistently espoused a high standard of morality in the government and especially in the higher eche-

lon of public administration. My concept of public service has been, and will always be, service to the people above self. I realize, of course, that we cannot with one stroke of the pen do away with corruption in the government. But I do believe that the only way to keep crooks away from the government is to keep them in jail — where they belong. (*Applause.*)

The strong and rather pronounced views that I have repeatedly expressed on the conduct of men in public office has, unfortunately, involved me in great and acrimonious controversies in the past. Naturally, there have been some who have been disturbed by what I have had to say. They are those who feel that my concept of public service is old and outmoded. To them, it would seem that public office is a means to an end, a stepping stone for the accumulation of wealth and personal power. There are even those outside the administration who brazenly act as if the government were their own property, a private preserve to use and exploit as they see fit. To these men and to the political "hucksters" that they employ, anyone who talks of cleaning the government commits a great and unpardonable political sin to the party. No wonder I have been harrassed, blocked and even ostracized by some of my old political friends. And because I have refused to play the game according to their rules, I have become an outcast in their eyes.

My friends, I am proud to say that I have never sacrificed principle at the altar of expediency. I have not done so in the past, and I do not intend to do so now or in the future. So, I say to those who think that politics is just a game with wealth and power as the high stakes, that I shall not deviate from my chosen course. I shall not falter and will continue to work for honest government and expose abuses and injustice wherever I see them, regardless of the consequences to myself and my party and no matter whom it hurts. I shall shout from the roof tops, if necessary, and "let the chips fall where they may."

One of the reasons which prompted me to resign from the Liberal Party and join a great patriot, General Carlos P. Romulo, in the founding of the Democratic Party, was the fact that I had become convinced that it was impossible for me to remain loyal to my old party and still be true to my trust as a public servant. Never had President Quezon's immortal words, "My loyalty to my party ends where my loyalty to my country begins," held so much meaning — at least for me — as when I decided to leave the party under whose banner I had been elected to the Vice-Presidency.

Believe me, it was a hard decision to make. When General Romulo and I decided to walk out of the Liberal Party we knew the odds that were against us. We realized too well the trials and tribulations, the misery and the heartaches that would surely be ours in a fight against an entrenched majority on the issue of better leadership and good government. But we were convinced that these principles could not be upheld within the framework of the Liberal Party, and undaunted, we proceeded to organize the Democratic Party as a vehicle for airing this basic political issue to the people. And, when in the course of the campaign, it became obvious that the hats that we had thrown into the political arena endangered the ultimate victory of the principles which we sought to uphold, General Romulo and I did not hesitate to sacrifice our own personal interests and withdraw from the race in favor of the two great leaders of the coalesced opposition, Ramon Magsaysay and Carlos P. Garcia. (*Applause.*)

This great coalition of the Nacionalista and Democratic parties under the leadership of Ramon Magsaysay, is the medium by which honest and sincere men hope to bring about a change in the political atmosphere in this country. We need fresh, pure and clean air. The Filipino people are entitled to a fair deal, simple justice and the truth. And I am convinced that when truth finally outs, as it inevitably does, and when the political double deals of the past are revealed in their true color, an enraged citizenry

shall give bent to its fury in a popular expression of the public will at the elections on November 10.

I have been asked by friends why I have accepted a berth on the coalition ticket for the Senate. I have, as you know, served as Mayor of Iloilo, then as Senator, before assuming the office of Vice-President in 1949. Not being a professional politician, I had hopes of eventually retiring from politics and returning to the peaceful, quiet and normal life to which I had always been accustomed. When I withdrew as candidate for Vice-President, I thought that chance had finally come. Unfortunately, it could not be so because the leaders of the coalesced opposition invited me to run for the Senate.

I have accepted nomination as candidate for the Senate because I consider it the duty of every citizen to serve his country in any position that he can be most useful. Although I have already served one full term as Vice-President — the second highest elective position in the nation — I can assure you that I shall be willing to serve in any capacity, even as a humble councilor, if by so doing I feel that I can render real and positive service to my country and people. (*Applause.*)

There is also another reason why I have agreed to run as a candidate for the Senate. In the great political campaign that is now unfolding, it is the duty of every candidate for office to present to the people the basic issues of the election. Truly, this is a responsibility that I relish because I sincerely feel that our people are entitled to the truth and should know the real state of our political affairs.

What are the issues in this election?

I know that each candidate has his own pet issue, but by and large the fundamental principles involved in this election are now clearly defined.

First and foremost, we must have a cleansing of the government administration. I have said before and I repeat that we cannot plan for our economic and political progress unless we succeed in establishing here an efficient machinery of government.

Second, we must have dynamic leadership from the very top and at all levels of government activity. The coalesced opposition parties believe that they can provide such leadership. In Ramon Magsaysay we have a born leader who in the brief period of his public career has electrified the nation with his energy, enthusiasm, ability and proven honesty. His understanding of the problems of the common man will no doubt contribute to the rapid promotion of the social justice program of the government and insure the economic stability of the Philippines. (Applause.)

Third, we must develop respect for the Constitution and establish a government of laws and not of men. If our Republic is to survive, we must re-establish public confidence in the government by insuring that laws are enforced, criminals brought to justice, and the Constitution upheld. We must disband private armies, get rid of bodyguards and return the convicts to jail. Political gangsterism must end in order that we may enjoy a regime of law and order.

These are the high stakes in the elections of 1953. Yours is the choice between the *status quo*, on the one hand, and a return to sanity and order, on the other. What shall it be?

I see this a question close to your hearts. For as I look around me, I can see written in your young and eager faces the desire and the determination to do something in a positive sense to help your country. That is as it should be. For you are young, mentally alert, patriotic and fair. You can do much to strengthen your government and make it play its rightful role in the progress of our nation. You

can do much, if you have the will so to do, because you are citizens of this Republic and as such enjoy certain rights which make it possible for you to have a voice in the conduct of national affairs.

One of the most precious political rights guaranteed to a citizen of this country under our democratic Constitution is the right of suffrage. This, to my mind, is the most fundamental of all our political rights because in the exercise of this right every citizen of the Republic is afforded the opportunity and the privilege, directly or indirectly, to participate in the establishment and administration of our government.

In acquiring this right, however, we, as citizens, acquire an equal if not a greater responsibility. It is the political responsibility of citizenship, one which must be exercised diligently and conscientiously in order that democracy may succeed.

What does this responsibility consist of?

First, is the duty of every citizen to interest himself in the affairs of his community, his nation and the world at large.

Second, is the duty of every citizen to keep well informed on vital issues of the day in so far as they affect himself, his family and his people.

Third, is the duty of every citizen to form an opinion and express his views, if necessary, on current issues of the day.

Fourth, is the duty of the citizen to acquaint himself with the vital issues involved at each election and with a complete understanding of such issues vote for the right man for the right job.

Fifth, is the duty of the citizen to remain ever vigilant in defense of his constitutional rights and privileges and to

make sure that once his vote is cast that same should be respected as his rightful wish.

Sixth, is the duty of the citizen after an election to abide by the wishes of the majority, to close ranks, and to obey the laws and edicts promulgated by the legally — constituted authorities.

This, my friends, is citizenship of the highest order. This is the type of citizenship responsibility that gives sustenance to democracy and makes it work.

As citizens, let us not close our eyes to the realities of the day. For democracy in this country is facing its severest test. Our ability to conduct ourselves as free men, expressing our voluntary will in a free and honest election, will decide whether this Republic which has been built on the sacrifices of so many in the past shall thrive, prosper and flourish or whether it shall wither and die and pass on into oblivion.

You have invited me here in my official capacity as Vice-President of the Philippines to give you a sober message almost on the eve of the elections.

Using the strongest terms at my command, I enjoin you to exercise your right of suffrage. Use your vote and use it well! I say this not as a candidate for office pleading for your support, but as an official of this government deeply concerned with insuring the success of our Republic.

I urge you not only to vote but to see to it that your friends, your families and your neighbors do. Every legitimate vote cast at the polls is a vote denied to the "flying voter" and to the perpetrators of electoral frauds. Remember, if you don't vote others may use your vote for you.

And so, again, I say to each and everyone of you, and to each and every citizen of this country:

"Vote as you please, but PLEASE vote."

Bear in mind that your vote — that one solitary ballot which you cast in the polls — when added up to the millions of other votes of the electorate of this country, represents the written expression of the will of the people, the motive power behind government, and the propelling force for national policy.

Do not underestimate the power of your vote. For only when citizens actively express their will at the polls, can a government become truly responsive to the needs of the nation.

Last Sunday, as I pondered over the message that I would leave with you on this occasion, my attention was called by a news item in the local papers written by the Associated Press correspondent in Hongkong. Under the heading of "All Asia Watches Philippine Elections," the article read as follows:

I quote —

"The man in the dusty street or the sludgy rice paddy of Asia is watching the Philippine election next month with much personal interest.

"This is unusual in a part of the world where elections don't rate too highly.

"From New Guinea clear into Red China and probably beyond, this election has caught Asia's attention as a sort of test of the new nations and new freedoms that sprouted after World War II." Unquote.

I must say that this short article is full of meaning.

We need not stretch our imagination to realize how disastrous it would be for the cause of democracy in the Far East if our own experiment in this country fails to succeed. For the Philippines today is the best "show window" of democracy in this part of the world. Ever since we became free and independent, the nations around us have watched the progress of this Republic quite closely. They

have watched us not only because they wish us well, as our friends and our neighbors, but because they themselves have become free or are about to be set free and they are interested in finding out whether democracy can really work under the conditions that exist in the countries of Asia today. Naturally, if the experiment in democracy in the Philippines succeeds, we shall influence many of our neighbors to adopt the same or a similar form of government based on the principle of the greatest good for the greatest number. If we fail to impress our neighbors, then they, in turn, will be ripe for Communist infiltration, and we may wake up one day to find ourselves surrounded on all sides by unfriendly and hostile regimes.

Not only is the good name, reputation and prestige of the Philippine Republic at stake in the coming elections, so is possibly the fate of democracy in Asia.

From a domestic as well as an international viewpoint, the election on November 10 becomes crucial to the destiny of our people.

Once again — as in the past — the nation calls on its citizens.

Imbued with a high sense of patriotism, let us exercise our civic responsibilities with diligence and care.

Let us vote intelligently.

Let us keep inviolate the sanctity of the ballot.

Let us keep our heads cool and let reason prevail.

Let us listen to the voice of the people, and once expressed, let us abide by its dictum.

Let us show to the world that we are politically mature and deserving of the sovereignty which we have won through the blood and sacrifices of our forebears.

Finally, let us prove to ourselves that here, in this country, we have a citizenry alert to its responsibility and fully capable of enjoying the blessings of democracy. (*Prolonged applause.*)

